

ing about in your opening statement?

*President Yeltsin.* That's ahead. That's for our negotiations.

#### *Nuclear Arms Agreement*

*Q.* Boris Nikolayevich, tell us please, and you, Mr. Bush, both agree that the program is very, very intense, a lot on the plate, 20 different issues. What are you going to be concentrating your attention on with Mr. Bush?

*President Yeltsin.* First of all, national security and deep cuts in nuclear arms. As a matter of fact, up until now we have not yet finalized this issue, but we have met with the President and with our delegations, of course, and the Secretaries of State and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to sit down

and finalize this today. And I'm sure that we will find a solution, and we shall sign a balanced, equal agreement. I'm sure of that.

*Q.* Do you think you will be able to announce a new arms control agreement by the end of the day?

*President Bush.* As soon as you get out of here, we're going to talk about it.

Thank you all.

*Note: The exchange began at 10:35 a.m. in the Oval Office. President Yeltsin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.*

## Remarks With President Boris Yeltsin of Russia Announcing Strategic Arms Reductions and an Exchange With Reporters

June 16, 1992

*President Bush.* Mr. President. Let me just say that I'm pleased to announce that President Yeltsin and I have just reached an extraordinary agreement on two areas of vital importance to our countries and to the world.

First, we have agreed on far-reaching new strategic arms reductions. Building on the agreement reached with Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Byelarus, our two countries are now agreeing to even further dramatic strategic arms reductions, substantially below the levels determined by START. We've agreed to eliminate the world's most dangerous weapons, heavy ICBM's and all other multiple warhead ICBM's, and dramatically reduce our total strategic nuclear weapons.

Those dramatic reductions will take place in two phases. They will be completed no later than the year 2003 and may be completed as early as the year 2000 if the United States can assist Russia in the required destruction of ballistic missile systems. With this agreement the nuclear nightmare recedes more and more for ourselves, for our children, and for our grandchildren.

Just a few years ago, the United States was planning a strategic nuclear stockpile of about 13,000 warheads. Now President Yeltsin and I have agreed that both sides will go down to 3,000 to 3,500 warheads, with each nation determining its own force structure within that range.

I'd like to point out that this fundamental agreement, which in earlier years could not have been completed even in a decade, has been completed in only 5 months. Our ability to reach this agreement so quickly is a tribute to the new relationship between the United States and Russia and to the personal leadership of our guest, Boris Yeltsin.

In the near future, the United States and Russia will record our agreement in a brief treaty document that President Yeltsin and I will sign and submit for ratification in our countries. President Yeltsin and I have also agreed to work together, along with the allies and other interested states, to develop a concept for global protection systems against limited ballistic missile attack.

We will establish a senior group to explore practical steps towards that end, in-

cluding the sharing of early warning and co-operation in developing ballistic missile defense capabilities and technologies. This group will also explore the development of a legal basis for cooperation, including new treaties and agreements and possible changes to existing treaties and agreements necessary to implement the global protection system. That group, headed by Dennis Ross for the United States, will first meet in Moscow within the next 30 days.

In conclusion, these are remarkable steps for our two countries, a departure from the tensions and the suspicions of the past and a tangible, important expression of our new relationship. They also hold major promise for a future world protected against the danger of limited ballistic missile attack.

Mr. President, all yours.

*President Yeltsin.* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to add a few words to what President Bush has just announced here. What we have achieved is an unparalleled and probably an unexpected thing for you and for the whole world. You are the first to hear about this historic decision, which has been reached today after just 5 months of negotiations. We are, in fact, meeting a sharp, dramatic reduction in the total number for the two sides of the amount of nuclear warheads from 21,000 to 6,000 to 7,000 for the United States of America and Russia.

Indeed, we have been able to cut, over those 5 months of negotiations, the total number of nuclear warheads to one-third, while it took 15 years under the START Treaty to make some reductions. This is an expression of the fundamental change in the political and economic relations between the United States of America and Russia. It is also an expression and proof of the personal trust and confidence that has been established between the Presidents of these countries, President Bush of the United States of America and the President of Russia.

These things have been achieved without deception, without anybody wishing to gain unilateral advantages. This is a result of the trust entertained by the President of the democratic Russia towards America and by the President of the United States towards the new Russia. This is the result of a care-

fully measured balance of security. We were not going in for numbers, for just 1,000, 2,000, 3,000 pieces. Rather, we have established a bracket for each country to elect the number they figure that it will consider appropriate for its own defense and security.

As I have told you, the total number will go down from 21,000 to 6,000 for two sides. Under the first phase, the reductions for the two sides will be down to 3,800 to 4,250 bracket; including ICBM's, 1,250; and heavy missiles, 650; SLBM's, 2,250. Under the second phase, we shall go down to respectively 3,000 and 3,500, including total reduction and destruction of heavy missiles. Land-based MIRV's will be reduced as well. SLBM's will go down to 1,750.

Each country will elect the figure that it will consider appropriate to ensure its defense and security. Thus, we are departing from the ominous parity where each country was exerting every effort to stay in line, which has led Russia, for instance, having half of its population living below the poverty line. We cannot afford it, and therefore, we must have minimum security level to deal with any possible eventuality which might arise anywhere in the world and threaten our security.

But we know one thing: We shall not fight against each other. This is a solemn undertaking that we are taking today, and it will be reflected as a matter of partnership and friendship in the charter that we are going to sign. Our proposal is to cut the process of destruction from the proposed 13 years down to 9 years. So the things that I have been mentioning before will be materialized by the year 2000.

I am happy to be involved here in this historic occasion, and I will also hope that I will be as happy when this thing is materialized, and President Bush and I will be celebrating together the implementation of that agreement in the year 2000. I thank you.

I want to add that these figures have been agreed with and ratified by the Secretary for Defense, Mr. Cheney, and the Defense Minister, Pavel Grachev, of the Russian Federation. I thank you.

*President Bush.* I would only add to that my gratitude to the Secretary of State; to

Mr. Kozyrev, his counterpart; and also to General Scowcroft and others that have worked on this and accomplished all this in record time.

We are going to have a press conference tomorrow and so maybe we'll just take one each here.

Q. Mr. President, just a few days ago, President Yeltsin was complaining you were trying to take advantage of him. How do you—

*President Bush.* I can't hear, there's too many questions.

Q. Vietnam POW's—

*President Bush.* Right here. I'm going to have a little statement on that in just a minute.

Q. Would you explain to people who might not understand why friends who trust each other and do not plan to attack would still need 7,000 nuclear warheads?

*President Bush.* What I am saying we've moved dramatically down from 13,000. This will be seen as an enormous move forward towards the relaxation of tension and towards the friendship that we feel for each other; the elimination of the most destabilizing of weapons is extraordinarily positive. The fact that each country, at this juncture in history, retains some nuclear weapons speaks for itself. Who knows what lies out there ahead? But certainly I agree with what President Yeltsin said, that there is no animosity. The cold war days are over. He came here in a spirit of forward movement on these arms control agreements, and that speaks for itself.

*President Yeltsin.* I would like to amplify on that. I would say that in response to your question, that the technical and financial resources that are required in order to destroy, dismantle, and reduce the total number of warheads and missiles from 21,000 to 6,000, 7,000 is enormous. This is the only thing that conditions this figure.

*POW-MIA's*

*President Bush.* With your permission, Mr. President, I would like to take the last question which relates to the POW-MIA discussions that we have had.

President Yeltsin and I discussed this morning that issue that is of the highest priority for our administration and, I know,

for every American: the fate of American POW's and MIA's from World War II, Korea, the cold war period, and Vietnam.

President Yeltsin informed me for the first time that Russia may have information about the fate of some of our servicemen from Vietnam. He said the Russian Government is pursuing this information vigorously, just as we speak. And with us today are President Yeltsin's adviser, Dmitri Volkogonov over here, Dmitri, and our able former Ambassador to the U.S.S.R., Ambassador Malcolm Toon. Now, they are the co-chairs of the joint U.S.-Russian Commission on POW-MIA's. They've met during the last few months along with the Members of the United States Congress who are also part of this bipartisan U.S. delegation to unearth information on American POW's and MIA's from 1945 on, and Russian POW's and MIA's from the Afghan war.

President Yeltsin and I have instructed both of these gentlemen to begin immediately a joint U.S.-Russian pursuit of the latest information that was given to me today. I have asked Ambassador Toon to return immediately to Moscow to work on this issue. And I want to assure all Americans and particularly those families of the American POW's and MIA's that we will spare no effort in working with our Russian colleagues to investigate all information in the Russian archives concerning our servicemen. While we do not have any specific information to make public today, I pledge to keep the American people informed of developments on this issue and as we find out more about these latest leads.

Let me just point out that the forthcoming comments by President Yeltsin is just one more sign of this improved new relationship between Russia and the United States of America. For him to go back and dig into these records without fear of embarrassment is an enormous consequence to the people of the United States of America. And I salute him for this. He has told me that he will go the last mile to find whatever it is exists about our possibility of American POW's and MIA's and to clear this record once and for all. And in so many other fields this demonstrates his leadership and the period of change that we are salut-

ing and I saluted here today on the South Lawn of the White House.

So we're very grateful to you, Mr. President.

Q. Did he say that they're still alive?

Q. —Americans are alive, Mr. President? Do you think—

*President Yeltsin.* I will only add a couple of words, Mr. President. Our commission, headed and chaired by Dmitri Volkogonov, has been meeting for several months now, and it has already met with some success. I can promise that the joint commission, which will be established following this press conference, will be working hard and will report to the American public all the information that will be found in the archives that we are going to open for it, including the archives in the KGB, in the Central Committee of the Communist Party regarding the fate of American POW's and MIA's.

Q. Mr. Bush, do you agree it's possible some of those Americans may still be alive?

*President Bush.* I would simply say that

I have no evidence of that, but the cooperation that has been extended and again is being extended by the President of Russia will guarantee to the American people that if anyone's alive, that person, those people would be found. Equally as important to the loved ones is the accounting for any possible MIA. And so we have no evidence of anyone being alive, but I would simply say again that this is the best way to get to the bottom of it. This new approach by the President of Russia to go into these archives and to try to find missing records will be the best assurance that I can give the American people that the truth will be revealed finally.

Q. Is there a danger of raising false hopes here, Mr. President?

*President Bush.* You've got to be careful of that, yes.

*Note: President Bush spoke at 2:47 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. President Yeltsin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.*

## Message to the Senate Returning Without Approval Legislation Amending the Mississippi Sioux Indian Judgment Fund Act

June 16, 1992

*To the Senate of the United States:*

I am returning herewith without my approval S. 2342. This bill would waive the 6-year statute of limitations, allowing three Sioux Indian tribes—the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, the Devils Lake Sioux Tribe, and the Sisseton-Wahpeton Council of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation—to bring an otherwise time-barred challenge to the 1972 Mississippi Sioux Indian Judgment Fund Act.

The 1972 Act apportioned to each of the three Tribes, and to a then-undetermined class of Sioux Indians who are not members of those Tribes, a percentage share of the proceeds from a 1967 judgment against the United States. The judgment rested on a finding that the United States had not paid adequate compensation to the Tribes in the 1860's for lands ceded to the United States.

The nonmember Indians are persons who are not now eligible for membership in any of the three Tribes, but who can trace their lineal ancestry to someone who was once a tribal member.

The Tribes were active participants in the administrative and legislative process leading to the 1972 Act, and they endorsed the Act and its distribution of the judgment. Nonetheless, in 1987, 15 years after enactment and 9 years after the statute of limitations had run, the Tribes sued the United States, challenging the Act's distribution to the nonmembers. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit affirmed a lower court's decision to dismiss the case, finding no excuse—legal, equitable, or otherwise—for the Tribes' failure to challenge the 1972 Act in a timely fashion, and the U.S. Supreme Court declined to review the Ninth